

REMARKS

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the output terminals referred to at claim 1, line 6-7, include both the M1 signal output terminals and the expansion output terminal. It is believed that claim 1, as now amended, is not open to rejection on the ground of indefiniteness.

Claim 12 has been amended by way of clarification.

The new claim 13 is dependent on claim 1 but adds the feature of the input and output interfaces that are shown in FIG. 3.

Claims 1, 2 and 12 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 over Guha in view of Molnar.

The present invention, as defined in claim 1, is concerned with a routing switch composed of first and second router modules. The first and second router modules are similar (they may be identical) and the first router module has N1 signal input terminals, an expansion input terminal and (M1+1) output terminals, including M1 signal output terminals and an expansion output terminal. The first router module includes a means for routing a signal received at any one of the N1 signal input terminals to any one or more of the (M1+1) output terminals and for routing a signal received at the expansion input terminal selectively to any one or more of the M1 signal output terminals. The expansion output terminal of the first router module (e.g. the terminal 42A in the case of the embodiment shown in FIG. 3) is connected to the expansion input terminal of the second router module (the terminal 46B in the case of FIG. 3) and the expansion output terminal (42B) of the second router module is connected to the expansion input terminal (46A) of the first router module.

FIG. 8 of Guha discloses a conventional 3-stage Clos routing switch comprising an input stage composed of six 6x11 crossbars, an intermediate stage composed of eleven 6x6 crossbars and an output stage composed of six 11x6 crossbars. The eleven outputs of any one crossbar in the input stage are connected to respective inputs of the eleven crossbars of the intermediate stage and similarly the six outputs of a crossbar in the intermediate stage are connected to respective inputs of the six crossbars of the output stage. The eleven outputs of each input stage crossbar are thus connected in similar fashion to the eleven intermediate stage crossbars. The

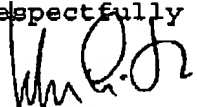
outputs of the intermediate stage crossbars are all connected in similar fashion to the output stage crossbars.

The examiner correctly points out that Guha does not disclose expansion input terminals and expansion output terminals. The examiner suggests that it would have been obvious in view of Molnar to designate one of the inputs ports of the input stage crossbar as an expansion port. Applicant respectfully traverses. Molnar does not disclose expansion input terminals and expansion output terminals, which may be interconnected in the manner defined in claim 1, but expansion I/O ports, and the expansion I/O ports are not used to communicate between switches in the base communication system of Molnar but between the switch and the world outside the base communication system. The prior art does not suggest that an output terminal of one of the intermediate stage crossbars shown in Guha should be connected to an input of one of the input stage crossbars.

In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that the invention, as defined in claim 1, is not disclosed or suggested by Guha and Molnar, whether taken singly or in combination. It follows that claim 1 is patentable and it follows that the dependent claims 2-8 and 13 also are patentable.

Claim 12 defines the invention in a more general manner than claim 1 and is patentable for the reasons advanced in support of claim 1.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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